

THIRD ANNIVERSARY OF THE MURDER OF UKRAINIAN GEORGIY GONGADZE

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, the nation of Ukraine recently celebrated the 12th anniversary of its independence from the former Soviet Union. This milestone, gained after decades under Soviet repression, is a notable achievement that bears witness to humanity's inextinguishable and universal desire for liberty and freedom. Twelve years after its independence, much has been achieved, yet much work remains to be done before Ukraine is able to fulfill its considerable promise and fully join the Euro-Atlantic community of nations that find unity through their commitment to democracy and a steadfast adherence to the rule of law.

Yesterday also marked the third anniversary of the disappearance and murder of Ukrainian journalist Georgiy Gongadze. This anniversary casts a pall over Ukrainian society and underscores the problems it faces as it seeks to reform its domestic political situation. The editor of an internet newspaper, *Ukrainska Pravda* Ukrainian Truth—Gongadze reported widely on corruption within highest circles of Ukrainian society. He was an outspoken critic of corruption, and his decision to create an internet news journal was done in part to avoid some of the censorship and intimidation imposed upon journalists in Ukraine who routinely have their papers seized, presses damaged, and lives threatened by government officials.

However, Gongadze's actions did not escape official notice. Nothing done by members of the fourth estate is going unnoticed in a nation that Reporters Without Frontiers ranked 112th in its rating of worldwide media freedom. After Gongadze's disappearance, tapes secretly recorded by Mykola Melnychenko, a former bodyguard for President Leonid Kuchma, documented plans by President Kuchma and other government officials to dispose of Gongadze by a variety of means including "selling him to the Chechens."

Since his disappearance 3 years ago, little headway has been made into the investigation of his murder. Ukrainian officials have hindered efforts by the FBI to examine evidence, court documents have been forged and a witness in the case recently died while in police custody. Delays into this investigation and the lack of transparency with which it has been conducted undermine the reputation of Ukraine and hinders its relationship with the United States, the European Union, and NATO.

Much has been made of Ukraine's contribution to Operation Iraq Freedom. Currently, a brigade of Ukrainian soldiers are on the ground in Iraq, and this contribution is greatly appreciated. Yet such assistance, coupled with military reform, should not be seen as a quid pro quo for a lack of reform on Ukraine's domestic front. Unification with the Euro-Atlantic com-

munity is not merely a geopolitical or bureaucratic decision. Ukraine must continue efforts to develop and implement a responsive and transparent rule-based system of law before it is fully able to from the West.

The conduct of the October 2004 Presidential elections in Ukraine will be watched closely by the international community. Free and fair elections, regardless of their final outcome, will be an important step toward Ukraine's rapprochement with the community of nations. This election will be vital not for its outcome, but for the process by which it is conducted. It is my hope that the October 2004 elections will aid Ukraine's transformation from a nation where fear undermines public discourse into a nation where all facets of society can freely engage in the marketplace of ideas without fear of re-creation. Only in such a society will we be able to learn the truth surrounding the disappearance and murder of Georgiy Gongadze. His family and the Ukrainian people deserve no less.

TRIBUTE TO MARVIN "SONNY" ELIOT

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, today I have the honor of recognizing a great American and Michigander, Marvin "Sonny" Eliot. Sonny was born and raised in my hometown of Detroit. He is well known as a popular TV and radio weatherman, with a career spanning 57 years. However, equally as impressive as his broadcasting career is his aviation and military career.

Sonny had always wanted to fly planes. While in high school, he commuted across town to take a special aviation course at another school. Sonny did so well on the final exam that he was awarded flying lessons, which led to his pilot's license in 1940. After high school, Sonny attended Wayne State University. Before finishing a degree program, he decided to enlist in the U.S. Army Air Corps.

Following his training in the Air Corps, Sonny was shipped to Wendling, England, where he flew B-24's as part of the 392nd Heavy Bomber Group. During World War II, Sonny was shot down over Gotha, Germany on his 16th mission. Subsequently, he was captured by the Nazis and spent 16 months as a Prisoner of War in Germany, 14 of which were in the prison camp Stalag Luft I. Due to his valor and loyalty in the service, Sonny earned the Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal, and Purple Heart. In addition, he received the Presidential Unit Citation with all the members of the 392nd Heavy Bomber Group for carrying out one of the most vital air strikes of the aerial attacks of the war.

After returning from Europe in 1945, Sonny continued his studies at Wayne State University where he earned a B.A. in English and an M.A. in Mass Communication and began his career in broadcasting. He has spent almost six decades on Detroit's airwaves with

WWJ Radio and Channels 2 and 4 television, best known as a personable and humorous weatherman. In fact, his witty weather reports have been named the nation's best by the National Association of TV Program Executives.

Nevertheless, his interest in aviation never faded. While at Channel 4 TV and WWJ, Sonny won numerous news media awards for promotion and public awareness of aviation. In addition, he continues to fly and has accumulated more than 7,500 hours. Sonny holds the rank of colonel in the U.S. Air Force Reserve and was named the Air Force liaison for the 1st Congressional District. In October 2001, as a result of his lifelong commitment to aviation, he was enshrined into the Michigan Aviation Hall of Fame.

Currently, Sonny can be heard on WWJ-AM 950 with his easy-to-understand weathercasts. I am pleased to join my colleagues in the Senate in saluting Marvin "Sonny" Eliot's lifetime full of contributions to his country and the state of Michigan. I wish him continued success in the future.

NEGOTIATION OF A U.S.-CENTRAL AMERICAN FREE TRADE AGREEMENT

Mr. BAUCUS. Mr. President, I rise today to address the ongoing negotiations for a United States-Central America Free Trade Agreement—also known as the "CAFTA."

These negotiations present a couple of unique challenges.

First, most of the CAFTA countries are less developed, both economically and politically, than Mexico, Chile, or any of our other FTA partners. This presents challenges to the abilities of the Central American countries—both to negotiate a comprehensive set of commitments and to implement them effectively.

Second, these negotiations are on an accelerated schedule. They started in January 2003 and are set to conclude by the end of this year. The limited trade negotiating capacities of the CAFTA countries makes this an ambitious goal.

Third, several of the CAFTA countries played a less than constructive role at the WTO Cancun Ministerial. Their participation in the G-21 and the role of that group in precipitating the meeting's collapse raises serious questions about their commitment to trade liberalization.

I support comprehensive free trade agreements that create sound market access rules and meaningful commercial opportunities for American farmers, workers, and businesses. And I support, in principle, the goal of reaching such an agreement with the five CAFTA countries.

But we need to be realistic. A CAFTA agreement will be politically difficult here—much more so than the recently passed free trade agreements with Singapore and Chile. The issues it raises will be challenging on both sides of the aisle.